

TRANSIT TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT

Commuter rail was not viewed as a viable option because of the relatively short length of the corridor and the need for local access with more frequent station spacing than commuter rail.

Streetcar was also eliminated as a technology option. During the public outreach, the top ranked transit priorities as shared by the public and stakeholders were frequent service, quick travel time, and reliable service. Light rail better achieves these goals compared to streetcar.

The LYNX Silver Line study process identified the opportunity to create a single east-west light rail corridor that extends from Matthews to the airport and potentially beyond. This would create a single seamless corridor similar to the LYNX Blue Line and recently constructed LYNX Blue Line Extension.

Bus rapid transit was eliminated from consideration to maximize on this significant east-west rail opportunity. Furthermore, Sprinter service, which comprises some characteristics of bus rapid transit, already exists along Wilkinson Blvd.

For these reasons, **light rail** is the most logical technology for the West Corridor.



OTHER CORRIDORS CONSIDERED

West Boulevard

- On-going study will determine the location for the new roadway alignment, but will not conclude until 2020.
- Would bypass the terminal side of the airport, missing access to the airport itself.
- Participants at public workshops voiced concerns about a transit investment changing the character of their neighborhoods due to the expanded corridor footprint.
- More modest transit service enhancements along West Boulevard could be viable.

River District Access

- A fixed guideway along Wilkinson Boulevard would be forced to make a lengthy and circuitous trip around the airport property to reach the River District, resulting in inefficient operations.
- A transit spur from the primary corridor to the River District should be considered, rather than a circuitous extension of the main corridor.
- Connections aligned with upgraded bus service along the future relocated West Boulevard are logical.

UPCOMING PUBLIC MEETINGS

July 17 – Freedom Division/Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department: 4150 Wilkinson Blvd, Charlotte, NC 28208 (6–7:30 pm)

August 1 – Uptown Library: 310 N Tryon St, Charlotte, NC 28202 (11 am – 1 pm)

August 2 – Charlotte Mecklenburg Fire Department Headquarters: 500 Dalton Avenue, Charlotte, NC 28206 (6 – 7:30 pm)

August 21 – Gaston College Kimbrell Campus: 7220 Wilkinson Blvd, Belmont, NC 28012 (6 – 7:30 pm)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

VISIT:
ridetransit.org



Online Survey available at:
LYNXSystemUpdate.metroquest.com

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Wilkinson Boulevard

CATS is conducting a study to reevaluate and update the transit recommendation for the West Corridor

What is the purpose of this study?

The primary purpose of the study is to conduct the necessary transportation and land use analysis to select a *Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA)* to update the 2030 Transit System Corridor Plan. A similar effort was completed in November 2016 for the Southeast Corridor, and a parallel effort is now occurring for the North Corridor.

Why is the West Corridor being studied again?

Since the current West Corridor LPA was adopted in 2006, land use changes have continued along Wilkinson Boulevard. Charlotte Douglas International Airport has continued to expand, and recently completed a large-scale development plan for acreage surrounding the airport. Additionally, Charlotte City Council recently approved the River District, a large mixed-use development west of the Charlotte-Douglas Airport along the Catawba River. Gaston County stakeholders also have expressed renewed interest in exploring rapid transit options into Gaston County.

ROUTE ALTERNATIVES FOR EVALUATION

What is the current West Corridor Locally Preferred Alternative?

The current Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for the West Corridor is a streetcar alignment branching off from the CityLYNX Gold Line on Trade Street and running along Cedar Street, West Morehead Street and Wilkinson Boulevard and ending near Charlotte Douglas International Airport. As the West Corridor continues to transition and grow, it is appropriate to compare this option to other types of transit investments.

Why are rapid transit options important?

More transit options are needed to provide greater mobility to the existing and emerging neighborhoods in Charlotte, western Mecklenburg County, and Gaston County. Better transit connectivity to the airport from other transit corridors is also important.

NEXT STEP: DETAILED EVALUATION OF OPTIONS

A tremendous opportunity exists to view this project through a lens including a comprehensive mobility, land use, and quality of life approach to advance a wide range of local and regional goals. Specific evaluation criteria will be applied to each option:

- Travel speed & reliability
 - Nearby population & employment
 - Nearby ridership generators
- Health & community impacts
 - Neighborhood impacts
 - Traffic impacts
- Physical constraints & property impacts
 - Environmental considerations
 - Construction challenges

Could the transit corridor extend into Gaston County?

Representatives of Gaston County and municipalities within the County are stakeholders for this planning process. The transit options that will be considered may extend beyond Mecklenburg County, and at a minimum, will not preclude extensions into Gaston County as part of future investments.

Related Project: Airport Commercial Development

The Charlotte Douglas International Airport has begun a master planning process. The Airport owns a significant portion of surrounding land, including the swath of land between Wilkinson Boulevard and I-85. There are plans to develop this area into conference center space, hotel and commercial property.

Related Project: West Boulevard Relocation Project

The Federal Aviation Administration is currently conducting an environmental impact and alternatives analysis for a relocated West Boulevard. This study will determine the location for the new roadway alignment, but is not anticipated to conclude until 2020.

